THE DWELLINGS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

REV. W. B. MACKENZIE

THE

DWELLINGS OF THE RIGHTEOUS:

Pastoral Advice

ON

HOME DUTIES.

BY

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"The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous."—*Ps.* cxviii. 15.

"And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house."—*Luke*, x. 5.

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PREFACE.

The following Chapters on Home Duties were delivered, with some slight variations, to a much-loved people, who will recognise in them the subject-matter of some recent pastoral instructions.

The vast importance of the subjects, too slightly touched, and the hope of awakening the minds of some other parents to their duties and hopes, induce their publication. They will not, perhaps, be unwelcome to some to whom "Mar-

ed Life" may have suggested counse
comfort. These seeds are cast upo
e waters, with prayer in the name o
e Great Advocate with the Father, tha
e may plant them in some hearts, t
ar fruit to their comfort and His eter
l praise.

Holloway,
May 1853.

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ERRATUM.

Page 47, last line but one, *for* much *read* must.

THE RIGHT BEGINNING.

CHAPTER I.

"Oh! think that unto thee a trust is given,
To train that loved one for the bliss of heaven;
That from the moment of that creature's birth,
Thou art to him God's delegate on earth;
Yea, more,—thou art His priestess, and thy shrine
Is an immortal soul! Perform thy task divine."

If we diligently consider the historical Scriptures, together with the dealings of God's providence, we cannot fail to observe, that they who seek to honour Him in the first place, by giving up worldly things, however attractive or profitable, and enduring hardships, however great, in order to please Him, and set forth His glory, such single-minded Christians will not be overlooked amidst the eventful changes of this life, or the everlasting realities of the next. The men of this

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"Them that honour me, I will
and they that despise me shall l
esteemed." (1 Sam. ii. 30.)

be the Lord of all, in whom we live, and move, and have our being; — to Him we owe our life, — its duration, and all its comforts, — its termination and all its issues; — for when He withdraws our breath, that instant we die. It is His world we live in, His beneficent Providence that sustains us, His eye that guards and guides us from the cradle to the grave. If you would honour God, this is obviously the first step.

2. To receive the Gospel of His grace with a believing and obedient heart is the next thing. Let us solemnly remember that we are creatures ruined through hereditary sin, developed and brought out by our own wicked works, — that, moreover, through His boundless grace, deliverance is provided by the sacrifice of the Son, and by the in-dwelling of the Spirit of God, — that all this is revealed in the inspired Scriptures, and nowhere else, and proclaimed to men by the "ministers and stewards of His mysteries." No man, then, can honour God but by cor-

ally believing this. Not to believe a
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u can fix upon his name. But, not to
lieve the great God of all truth and
ghteousness, — to reject His statements
empty sounds, and to make light of
is eternal salvation as if it were not
edful or true, — this is offering the
ost insolent affront to the God of Hea-
n. When rebuking the Jews for their
belief, our Lord declared emphatically,
"Ye do dishonour me." How infi-
tely important it is, then, at the outset,
at we "believe on the name of His Son
sus Christ, and love one another, as

domestic government may not be wanting, God has placed the managing power in the hands of two parents, that if one fails, the family shall still have its ruler. To provide for the temporal welfare of their family is a parental duty so plain, that I need not stop to enforce it. Every member of the household must feel the obligation of downright industry. Idleness fills a house with misery, the tavern with drunkards, and the prison with convicts. Idleness is a disgrace to any one. Every station brings its duties. Wealth only changes them. Riches are miserably abused if they leave their possessor unemployed. Absalom was wealthy, vain, extravagant, and idle, — worse elements of character could not be. No wonder he became the tool of an ambitious intriguer, a rebel against his father, and fell into an untimely grave. God Himself, who fainteth not, neither is weary, sets the world an example of uninterrupted labour. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John, v. 17.) The

come." (Luke, xix. 13.)

Industry is best taught by t
example. Children will never
work if they see their lazy pa
lessly lounge life away. No a
earnest talk about diligence
the evil of such an enfeebling
In our day, too, when all busin
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man can foresee the changes in
employment which even a few y
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industry, sustained by unswervi
tude of principle are a fath

household by caring for the soul. The parents' first duty is to give all diligence that their children shall meet them at the right hand of God when life is over. It is an unspeakable mercy to children, though they cannot duly appreciate it, to have their parents spared until they are fairly launched into life. How many children fall into lamentable neglect, contract dissolute habits, and come to early ruin, because they were left as orphans in a world of sin!

God has implanted in the breasts of parents an instinctive affection for their children, so strong, that hardly anything can subdue it. They love them from their birth with unconquerable love. This is a wise provision to induce parents to begrudge no care, to think no pains or toil too great, if they can do their children good. In their earlier years, too, the character of children is tender, confiding, and easily susceptible. If parents will teach them with serious affection, and instil the lessons of God in such

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left to grow up, with no regard to any life but this,—taught, perhaps, such habits of diligence, that they may make their way in the world, but, as to their souls and their eternity, left to find all this out for themselves as best they may,—this is despising God in a way that, sooner or later, will yield its fruits of bitter disappointment and shame. How, then, are these principles to be carried out? Take these few plain directions,—

5. If God is to be honoured by your children and household, you must set the example. All the talking in the world will come to nothing, unless they observe that you do as well as teach. No vice is so soon seen through as insincerity, and no eyes are more piercing to find out any inconsistencies than our children and servants. Better leave a duty untouched than to enforce it on others, who see you neglect it yourself. St. Paul said to his flock,—"Be ye followers of me" (imitators). Can you say so to your households? Depend upon it, your children

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hat for their sakes you abstain from a
ppearance of evil. Never lose sight o
he force of example.

6. Remember that in your househol
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rapidly multiplies than disorder in a family. Peace, temper, economy, comfort, are sacrificed by loose and irregular mismanagement. It is God's own commendation of Abraham, that He knew he would "command his children and his household after him." To be placed at the head of a family brings serious responsibility; but let your household feel convinced that your power is used for their united good.

7. Parents are apt to fall into extremes. Some are always finding fault. If every trifle is magnified into a grave evil, home soon loses its charms, and young persons will grow discouraged and give up all efforts to please. Some of the worst characters have issued from this hurtful habit of incessant complaining. It breaks the spirit of children, and sets them against you. Recollect St. Paul's wise counsel, given twice over, as a matter of great importance: — "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." (Col. iii. 21; Eph. vi. 4.)

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The family of David, too, bro
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the results of judicious family government.

8. Religious instruction is the instrument for honouring God in our households. I do not dwell now upon secular education, important as it is. No period in the history of society has afforded such helps for obtaining knowledge as this. All ranks may easily acquire information. Even the ragged urchins that have neither houses or parents, are not left to grow up and die in inevitable ignorance. But God may be dishonoured, yea, all the more, by a man who has received some education. Knowledge is power, but the Bible alone teaches him how to use it. If, then, God is to be honoured in your families, take care that you set the Lord always before them. Use every means to direct their minds to Him. Counteract, uproot, the inherent atheism which sin has planted in every heart. Let the wonders of creation, the teeming abundance of mountain and valley, and the perpetual fertility of the earth

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o lift their minds to God. Accusto
hem to notice the changes of the sea
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events of Providence, — as memorials
God. Above all, bring them to the dail
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will of this Divine Creator. Seize occa
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nd make God angry. Draw their mind
o think of the death of the body, an
world of spirits beyond the grave. Fi

custom their minds to connect their hopes of heaven with the dying of the Lord Jesus. Strive to set Him before their hearts as a Being of infinite love towards children. Let them dwell much upon Him personally. Cherish their young affections and fix upon the Saviour. Speak of Him as always present with them, watching them, ready to help each moment, and waiting to do them good. Cultivate their conscience so that they shall feel instinctively that sin is sin, however gilded over; and that sin brings misery, however fools may laugh at it.

"He held him as an offering up to heaven,
A living sacrifice unto the God
Whom he invoked. 'O Thou who art,' he cried,
'Let this my son, mine only son,
Whom I thus dedicate to Thee;—let him,
Let him be taught Thy will, and choose
Obedience to it; may he fear Thy power,
Walk in Thy light——
And oh! my last, last prayer—to him reveal
The unutterable secret of Thy name.'"

9. Family worship is one of the mightiest agencies for good in every household

here it is duly carried out. The habit of sembling every day in the presence of od, and pleading together for blessings hich all need alike, tends to arrest every ember in the hurry of life, and to con-ont him at once with the realities of ernity. The reading of the Scriptures in gular order must occupy its due place your daily service, as the message from od, and if you will add some remarks of ur own here and there, upon the ssage, — pointed, pithy, the shorter e better — this may kindle life and in-rest in your service. Then kneel down, parents, children, servants, around the

atonement, who alone gives pardon, and strength, and life to His dying creatures whom He came to save.

It requires all the watchful energy that you can command to preserve this daily privilege from dwindling down into a habit of insipid formality. The ear gets so used to the sound of words, that at length they awaken no living impressions in the heart. Do not let your domestic altar grow cold, and lack the fire from heaven. Do not let it be tedious, but pointed, savoury, tender, heavenly, yielding a stream of blessing every day into the household. Let all be serious, punctual, affectionate; thus God will be honoured, and the whole household reap golden blessings.

10. It is certain that the Lord puts especial honour upon that person who strives to honour Him, in whatever station of life He has placed him. Abraham, for example, spent his earlier years in the house of his father, surrounded with idolatry and idolaters. When God called him to go to

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edge, rejoicingly, their unspeakable obli
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xample of their parents. Think wha
saac owed to the faithfulness of his fathe
braham,—Samuel to the prayers of hi
nother Hannah,—Timothy to the Bible
nstruction of his mother and grand
nother,—Ruth to the believing integrit
f her mother-in-law,—John the Baptis
the singular faithfulness of his honoure
arents. All these parents honoure
ted, and God put marked honour o

in making their son, whom they gave up entirely to Him and His service, one of the wisest and best of rulers which the Jewish Church and nation ever possessed! The fruits of all their faithful Bible teaching, which Eunice and Lois bestowed upon Timothy, are found in his eminently spiritual and loving character, which endeared him, above all others, to the heart of St. Paul, and made him, we doubt not, a means of rich blessing to multitudes of them that believed.

14. Every believer knows full well that closet-prayer, wherein the burdened heart pours its wants into the ear of "Him that sees in secret," is a channel of blessing which never fails. It brings an answer of peace to the bosom no longer ruffled, but now confiding and waiting; and often, very often, the prayer uttered in some hidden place, observed by no human eye, is acknowledged "openly" by some unmistakeable interposition of God. Jacob's midnight wrestlings at the ford Jabbok, issuing in the affectionate embrace of

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himself an infidel, spent a fe
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ago an Irish wanderer asked for a night's shelter in the cabin of a pious schoolmaster. In the evening the stranger found himself in a household where God was honoured. The second chapter of Ephesians was the family reading that evening. The expressions, "dead in trespasses and sins," "children of wrath," "walking according to the course of this world," struck the stranger's mind. He inquired into their meaning, and the conviction was fastened on his conscience that he was living in that perilous condition. He avowed that he was then on the way to a fair, with the intention of passing a quantity of counterfeit money which he had then with him. This money was thrown into the fire, a Bible was obtained, and the man returned home to pursue some other course of life, and, it is hoped, found the true riches which every earnest seeker may gain for himself in Him who, "though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich."

CHAPTER II.

"Look up, my soul, pant toward the etern
Those heavens are fairer than they see
There pleasures all sincere glide on in cry
There not a dreg of guilt defiles,
Nor grief disturbs the stream.
That Canaan knows no noxious thing,
No cursèd soil, no tainted spring,
No roses grow on thorns, nor honey wear

1. To build and launch a vesse
shall outbrave the rough storms
and reach at last that peaceful
worthy our best effort. Next

It may be feared that the importance of thus training our children for God is not so seriously felt as to place it, as it should be, among our first and most urgent claims. We go on without any wise and serious forethought, — adopt wrong methods, — see evils springing up in our children which make the day unhappy, and life's prospect dark; and yet, the thought might very justly occur, whether all this could not have been prevented; whether these manifest evils are not, in some degree, chargeable upon parents, not, perhaps, as matters of culpable neglect, but from not having sought to know what their duty is, and then prayerfully striven to fulfil it.

2. Children are "a heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord,"—precious, but very precarious,—a gift that may augment life's comforts, and open new sources of joy, but may break the heart, and bring down our gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. There is no degree of spiritual blessedness which our children may not

be saved,—so transcend
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3. But what are they b
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our children's hearts. Through careful, parental culture, many innate evils may never gain much power. Thus you may check their self-will by always leading them to think of others' comforts rather than their own. You may keep down pride by seldom praising them before their face, and then only for some moral good which God bestowed. You may so early train them to think of God, and to acknowledge Him in everything, that such thoughts shall be interwoven with their earliest ideas. You may check the rising of impatience, almost before your child is aware that a temper so hateful was kindling, and thus he will learn to suppress it himself. You may bring them to such an early love of truth, and such a free confession of their faults to you, that falsehood may never stain their lips. You may so counteract the love of the world, by habitual simplicity in dress, food, or whatever attracts the eye, that they will afterwards renounce the pomps and vanities of the world with-

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none can take such a genu

no one person in the world has such unbounded influence over the understanding and affections of another, as a judicious Christian parent can command among his own children. And where this combination of power is employed by enlightened Christian parents, seeking wisdom and strength from God, you are sure, sooner or later, to see the blessed results.

5. Occupied as many parents are, they are obliged to engage others to take part in their children's education. Still, the responsibility of parents can never be delegated to another. No person, however qualified and anxious, can train your children aright for the duties of this life, and solemnities of the next, without your diligent co-operation. A teacher is but an instrument in your hand. You can never make him your substitute. A teacher can give them secular learning without you, but he can do very little towards forming their characters, unless your children shall feel that he is backed

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who will train them. Long before they have passed into a teacher's hands, they will have acquired elements of character which they will never lose. Parents make a great mistake when they think that a child is educated just by learning lessons at school.

6. Education for good or for evil, for God and His glory, or for sin and its miseries, begins as soon as children can form an idea, or express a feeling. The example they witness, whether in the nursery or elsewhere,—the conversation they hear,—the actions they see,—the likings and dislikings which others around them express,—these things make lasting impressions on their character. Servants unconsciously educate them,—their playmates educate them,—the companions they find in the house or the street, in all places, at all times, with all persons,—the quick minds of children are receiving thoughts and feelings which go to form the opinions and habits that become fixed indelibly in their character. And

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them to be.

7. It is plainly necessar
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his purpose, fix it in his mind that such a thing is to be gained, and then his life's best energies must be bent to that shape. And let it be remembered, that in this fair land of freedom and expansive scope almost any rank or distinction is placed, legitimately, within the reach of well-directed effort. The badges of honourable pre-eminence, in Church and State, grace the brows which once ached with the anxious toils which test and discipline the characters of humble men.

But the main object which Christian parents will set before them, will be to bring their children up for God and His everlasting kingdom. You will ask yourself the question, and give the right answer, too: "What will it profit my child if he could gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" As parents we must feel,—feel strongly, that whatever our children acquire,—whatever reputation, learning, wealth, station,—if they know not God and His salvation through Jesus Christ, life will be miserable bond-

ge, and eternity an unspeakable curs
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8. No parent can be insensible to t
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thee for life's short journey here; but as to what shall befal thee when life is over, that, alas! is left miserably neglected! The claims of your own personal salvation are often pressed, that you may seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,—but as you love your children, train them not just for this world and then leave them to plunge into darkness and ruin, when the world forsakes them and its pageant is over. Doubtless, it is gratifying to parents to see their children standing well in the esteem of the world, and succeeding as prosperously as any of their neighbours,—but remember, that it may be your lot to stand by their bedside, and see your children struggling with death. And what if you wake up then, for the first time, to realise their souls' condition, and begin, when too late, to deal with their consciences? Can you bear to hear the bitter reproach from the fevered lip of a dying child: "Ah! my parents, why did you never tell me these things before? I have been labouring

to grasp the world, and hold it
now I am daily losing my hold of
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unspeakably unready, and this i
to which your training led me
God spare the heart of every p
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9. Directions how parents m
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when you rise up and when you lie down. Especially spend some portion of Sunday in questioning your children upon the Scriptures, and beseech God to graft them in their hearts. Train them to serious, confiding prayer to God, as the refuge and solace of life. Convince them that prayer is the mighty weapon that enables a Christian to do wonders. Bring them with you to public worship. Let their earliest feelings be connected with God, His Sabbath, His House, His Word, and you. And let your teaching and your example harmonise. Consider the Scripture instances of parents who succeeded in the religious training of their children, but fail not to observe that in all of them their example confirmed their teaching, and their teaching explained their example.

10. No element has mightier power in moulding the religious character of children than prayer—prayer with them and prayer for them. Serious, earnest, loving conversation with children about their

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11. It is an unspeakable relief to parents thus to bring their home-treasures and anxieties before the Lord. That is the faith of God's elect, which, like Hannah's, can so cast all parental burdens upon the Lord as to come away with the countenance no more sad, and the heart oppressed no longer. Take your burden, and your children, too, who often form the heaviest part of it, before the Lord—lay hold of His strength—claim His promises, and rest upon them, so as to find repose there. "Although my house be not so with God, yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: this is all my salvation and all my desire." If you cannot get your anxious heart calmed into peace, implore Him to increase your faith. Cast yourself upon the bosom of His promises, and reposing there awhile, you will come back with tranquil spirit, to meet again

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manifested in the judicious training of their children, which brings them up for God. Cultivate their religion just as you do your own. Watch for them lest they enter into temptation. Keep them from evil associates. Take care what sort of servants you place around them. Teach them to choose the good and refuse the evil. Train them to self-command. Habituate them to say "No," and to keep to it, when sinners entice. Keep them industrious,—enure them to the rough things of life. Show them that between a parent's roof and the kingdom of heaven there lies a world, carpeted with snares and folly—spiked all over with dangers—infested with evil spirits from beneath, and bad men lurking thievishly around, whereby millions who set out well, come at length to a fearful end. Feel yourself, and convince your children too, what a difficult and marvellous thing it is for any one to get safe to heaven out of a world like this. Enlist their sympathies, and then their energies,

with you. Thus by His blessing u
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13. In this great undertaking we
not left without equally great encoura
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people. God told the Israelites, if t
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for ever. Moses seldom gives any gr
promise to believers but he rememb
the children in it. "Things which are

round about thy table." Solomon touches the same string—the blessings upon believers' children, "The seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (Prov. xi. 21). Nor must we omit that most refreshing promise given by the prophet Isaiah,—"I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel" (Isa. xliv. 3, 5).

14. Nor will it be difficult to add to this encouragement by the examples of successful parents. Abraham trained up Isaac in the fear of God, and he is described as one of the loveliest characters in the Scripture,—a man of faith and prayer, descending at length to an honourable grave laden with blessing. Manoah and his wife were eminent for piety in a

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that Judea ever saw. Of the
apostles, eight of them were
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fathers' names are specially pre
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brothers were inspired to write t
of the New Testament. James
first of the Twelve Apostles,
down his life for Christ's sake,
the martyr's crown; and John
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... suffering. T

his unfaithful predecessor. When David's parents died, he felt their separation and the loss of their counsel. This brings him to plead with God, in confiding love —and let each young reader whose eye may rest on these pages offer the same prayer:—"Leave me not, leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies" (Ps. xxvii. 10).

16. Many, whose laborious lives have rendered the greatest service to mankind, ascribe the elements of their greatness to their wise parental training. Let Christian mothers remember these encouraging instances. Augustine never could forget his unspeakable obligation to his mother: she died soon after his conversion. "He closed his mother's eyes," says Fuller, "when through grief he had scarce any himself." Richard Hooker, one of the greatest men the Church of England had

idge attributed his first impressions to
s mother's teachings, who died when he
as young. John Newton, whose mo-
er died when he was seven years old
arnt lessons from her lips which provec
e seeds of eternal life in his soul. R
ecil was indebted to a pious mother fo
e strong impressions of religion, whicl
fterwards gave such character to hi
nergetic ministrations. Indeed, on
ight give a long catalogue of person
s Luther, Bishop Hall, George Herber
Swartz, Brainerd, who were first led b
heir mothers to the way everlasting.

The united labours of both paren
[illegible] blessed in the Christia

their uncle, while Archbishop Usher was trained up from infancy till he was eight years old by two aunts, both blind, but persons of great piety, and remarkably acquainted with sacred Scripture.

16. If we have nothing else to bequeath to our children, let us leave the recollection of our godly example and some lessons of His salvation planted in their souls. Let us take care that our children shall be able to say with Cowper —

> "My boast is, not that I deduce my birth
> From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth,
> But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
> The son of parents passed into the skies."

There is much to kindle our hopes while carefully training our children for the Lord. We may not see the fruit immediately—the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth; so, too, must parents wait. Piety will take root downward as well as bear fruit upward. We much teach them day by day, in faith and patience, in the morning sowing

teadfast in well-doing, [illegible]
aithful promise that, in due season, [illegible]
erhaps, till we are gathered to the gra[illegible]
—still we shall reap if we faint not.

THE HAPPY RESULTS.

CHAPTER III.

"For my own children, I desire not to prescribe how or where they shall serve God. This I would leave to His wisdom, whether it shall be in heaven or on earth; at home, or at the ends of the earth; as public or as private characters. But that they may be His servants, this one hope I would press to my bosom till I die."

PARENTAL duties are so difficult, yet so important, that we need every help. The domestic character and conduct of Abraham afford an example of such fidelity, and the happy fruits it yielded, as may well encourage others to tread in his steps.

1. Abraham was a man of pre-eminent, yea, almost unexampled piety. This is stated in a very striking way. When we are thoroughly confident of a man's character, we express ourselves with assurance how he will act when placed in

Let him be ...
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him, that he will command t
him to keep the way of the Lo
xviii. 19.) Personal piety in
the first thing. Many perso
coming parents, think much m
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God,—but he feels that he lacks that which alone can give life and reality to his words. How can he teach effectually the evil of sin which his child sees him practise every day,—the value of pardon through Christ Jesus which he never possessed,—or the renewing of the Holy Ghost, while it is quite plain that old things are not passed away, and nothing is become savingly new? How can any parent bring his child to believe that the soul outvalues the body, and God's favour is better than the world's smile, if it is quite plain by the tenor of your worldly life, that you are straining every nerve to make the most of this life, and leaving the soul, and its eternal realities, to take care of themselves? A parent can no more bring up children religiously, without possessing personal religion himself, than he could teach music who cannot distinguish sounds. It is not by bringing a child to church, or by giving a Bible-lesson now and then, that children are to be trained for God, but it

y the transforming influence which
ent's heart, when quickened by th
rit, has over the heart of his child;
by the words, the looks, the constan
bit of making all things lean that wa
by the impression diligently kept up
at life is but a short journey, and ou
reat business is, to do and suffer God
ill here, and enter his kingdom when w
lie, — it is by God's blessing upon suc
means that children's hearts are won t
God. To teach religion is not enough; yo
must have the thing; your children mu
feel that they have, in you, one that neve
fails to bring their interests before God i
ever, and there, in the secr
tioned, the

urge them to seek. Nothing unreal satisfies children. As you are instilling the truths of God into their mind, they will find it out, while they look into your face, whether you are just engaging them in serious talk, or it is out of the abundance of your own experienced heart that your mouth speaks to them.

2. Abraham maintained wise discipline in his house. Children are tender and light-hearted little things; they must laugh and play. Young creatures of all sorts have overflowing spirits. One loves to watch the lambs in a meadow, frisking about from mere exuberance of joy. Youth is the time for mirth and sport. All this is very natural, and just as needful. A mopish child excites one's pity and fear. They will find, however, in time, that life is full of grave realities, and it belongs to us to prepare our children to meet them. A parent may maintain discipline and yet may be full of affection. Abraham was one of the *kindest of* men. The care which he

ook of Lot, on leaving his father's hous
the generous spirit he showed when
toposed to Lot to settle elsewhere,
e strife of their servants,—his tend
licitude for Ishmael's welfare,—and t
stimony that God bore to Abraham
eep affection for Isaac, as his "only s
hom he loved,"—all this is proof enou
f the affection of Abraham's heart.

But with all this love, Abraham ke
p domestic discipline. "I know hi
at he will command his children a
is household after him." But to pr
erve such a household in good ord
as no easy thing; for he had in a

interests and mutual good-will. Abraham's character in this respect is a pattern for parents.

3. "I recollect hearing a sermon twenty years ago," writes Babington, in his good book on Christian education, "in which the preacher said, were he to select one word as the most important in education, it should be the word 'obey.'" "My experience," he adds, "fully convinces me that he was right." Disobedience in Adam brought sin and death into our world. Disobedience in childhood is the seed,—the ominous beginning, yea, the certain assurance of a youth of folly, a manhood of worldliness and vice, and an old age of shame. You must so rule your household, not just to make them feel your power, but to rule them well. The discipline of a family must be wise, affectionate, firm; not fitful—not austere—not partial or selfish, but such as shall promote the unity, peace and concord of the whole household. To such commands you must exact implicit obedience.

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hearty, instant, diligent c
your command, because it
mand,—that is the proper
a family; to do this with lov
tion, so that all shall feel i
good, is the responsibility ar
a parent.

4. Children, and sometin
will aim to break through tl
They will try, by a thousan
ther you really mean them
you say. Parents must neve
guard. If the thing is not
let it be so understood; bu
your child to evade a know

list their judgment too. But in their earlier years it is of the utmost importance to train them to yield their own will and obey authority. The spirit of the age demands that submission to lawful authority should be seriously impressed upon young minds. It is quite notorious how few people are able to rule well. One reason is, they never learnt to obey. He knows best how to use power, who learnt to reverence it in others. To know how to be under authority, whether in the family, —school,—counting-house, or state, is an important element in the character. This habit of obedience prepares the way for subjecting the understanding, the will, and the heart to God, which is the essence of personal Christianity. "Then are ye my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Look at the conduct of the Blessed Saviour,—that perfect model of parental discipline. With what invincible steadfastness of purpose He ruled His disciples, yet won them to *Himself* by the tenderest love. The

that kept them from sin
Him for His unfailing l
forted them in every sorr

5. If I were asked, then
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Methodical order, things
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row, in the same way, and
time, as they did it to-day,
but wise discipline make
The day must have its pro
—lessons correctly learnt,

tient attention, fixing the thoughts upon one thing at a time,—patient waiting,—patient acting,—patient enduring,—must be practised daily by every one who has to struggle through the difficulties of life. An impatient child is a plague to himself and to all his family. The various and humbling chastisements with which God visits his children, are sent to teach them just to be quiet and wait, "that patience may have her perfect work." In training our children, therefore, we should inure them to curb and subjugate their impatient temper, to be gentle and forbearing, and to cherish that quiet spirit which sheds peace throughout a household, and in the sight of God is of great price.

7. Cultivate, also, the discipline of zeal. "What is the secret way," one man asked another, "by which you do so much in a little time?" "When I have a thing to do," he replied, "I go and do it." Bring your children to abominate *dawdling* as *deeply* as you do. Fix this rule in their

to do, do it with all thy mig
is no work or device in the gr
ther thou goest." Cultivate the
self-occupation. Encourage the
themselves to useful employmen
them blush to be found idle
much is to be done.

8. Children will soon find it o
is difficult to be good. Have you
distinctly felt that,—have they
so? Did you seize upon that
Perhaps it is the first dawn o
self-knowledge. Did you s
that it is the sinfulness of th
which makes it difficult, and
hardships are God's way for

own difficulties; and that He gives His strength to all them who earnestly pray for it, is matter of every day's thankful experience. For them who overcome and endure manfully to the end, He has laid up in heaven a crown of life, is a consummation which myriads once struggling as we do, now happily enjoy.

9. Abraham's domestic teaching comprised both instructions and example. Religious instruction is much easier and more engaging to children when you convey it to them as information about facts. Teach them things, not merely doctrines about things. By serious conversation you may store a little child's mind very early with the leading events of Scripture History, and the outlines of the Christian faith which they imply. Each article of the Apostles' Creed, for instance, is a fact; talk it over with them, and your little children will listen to you with eager looks, and want you to tell it to them over again. Few parents but have witnessed with delight the interest

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learnt of Him, and, amidst all the troubles of a stormy world, found peaceful rest in Him; now they are with Him, beholding His glory. Let us never overlook the propensity to imitation, which is almost irresistible in young persons. Real godliness always shows its strength in withstanding the pernicious influence of bad example. Moses stood firm amidst the seductions of an idolatrous court. Caleb and Joshua were not moved by the combined calumny of thirty-eight unbelieving spies. Abraham lived in a land swarming with idolatry and idolators, and yet he steadfastly abhorred idols. It is natural that children should be more inclined to imbibe the principles and copy the habits of their parents, than of any other persons. It is one out of the countless mercies that many a soul now safe in heaven has to acknowledge, that his early habits were moulded by the example of pious parents, who spent their anxieties and unsparing labours in *training* their children for God.

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conduct, and life, of Isaac
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ence of faith which t
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judgment in the select
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that they may fulfil their marriage vows, "as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together." Isaac was less heroic than Abraham, and the current of his life flowed in a smoother course than Jacob's, —but the domestic peace of Isaac was broken, in old age, by the jealousies created by parental partiality. It is certain, however, that Abraham's godly instruction, example, and prayers, issued in blessings to Isaac, who walked all through life in the steps of his father's faith, and is now sitting, together with Abraham and Jacob, in the kingdom of the Father.

12. The happy effects of Abraham's domestic discipline are transmitted in streams of blessings to the remotest generations. Isaac's genuine piety reappears, perhaps, in stronger characters in his son Jacob. When emigrating to Egypt, with trembling steps lest he or his family should imbibe its idolatrous spirit, he strengthens his heart by offering sacrifices to the "God of his father

Think of that. Here is a parent, at
head of his numerous family just e
grating, — perplexed by the deep an
ties which are natural to such an imp
tant step; he seeks inward tranq
lity and strength in prayer, and in
time of need God appears to him,
grace to help, as his God and his fath
God.

13. Nor did Abraham's influence
out when Jacob breathed his last. Jo
his son, — that exemplary pattern
youthful decision for God, trod faith
in Abraham's steps, and inherited
blessing. It was owing to Josepl
that an impression of piety

responsibilities of the wilderness-journey, rather than enjoy the glitter of a palace and the inheritance of a crown.

14. Abraham's domestic fidelity yielded its fruits of blessing also among his servants. It was no slight honour put upon that patriarch that he should have such a son as Isaac, and such a servant at the head of his household as Eliezer. Rich as he was, Abraham could trust all he had to his faithful hands. When steps must be taken for Isaac's settlement in life, even that responsibility was confided, with the happiest result, to Eliezer's fidelity. For sixty years this faithful man was employed in Abraham's service, shared his godly counsel, and walked in his steps. Such an example, no doubt, proved a blessing to the under-servants. Probably it was at the request of Eliezer, that Deborah, her maid, accompanied the young bride, Rebecca, to her new house. This person, like Ruth Clarke in Mr. Venn's family, was a pattern of those faithful attendants whom Christian mistresses per-

of this servant Jacob [illegible]
infancy. For more than an
years Deborah lived in the
Isaac. When this valuable se
past labour, and no longer able
upon her aged master, Jacob
to spend the peaceful remna
days under his own roof; and
died, at a very advanced ag
family gathered with tears of g
the grave of their valued f
named the tree which overhung
"The Oak of Weeping."

15. This glance at Abraham
fidelity, issuing in rich, lasting,
blessings, may well encourage

will, and to seek His favour as their chief joy, then He will certainly mark you out for good. Scripture is bright all over with other specimens, besides Abraham, of parental fidelity yielding its rich blessings to their children and their children's children. From modern Christian biography one very encouraging example of the productiveness of parental fidelity may be given.

16. John Newton's mother died when he was only seven years of age. For some years he lived a course of unrestrained profligacy. The lessons of God, which his mother had planted, never forsook him. Conscience rebuked him with its scorpion-stings so appallingly, that he felt, as every religiously-educated youth must feel, how bitter it is for such an one to sin against God. After some years the prayers of his sainted mother were answered in his conversion. Perhaps the piety of this faithful man has told as much, in various directions, upon the *religion* and happiness of mankind, as

were converted to God, dire
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labours. We all know ho
Christianity in India and
indebted to the zeal of Dr.
but, it was the preaching of
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ministry. The name of T
also, and his solid, spiritual
on the Holy Scriptures, will
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known wherever English

sinners shall continue to be quickened by the Spirit, and believers live, and walk, and die, amid the triumphs of faith. It is mainly owing to Newton's prayers and counsels, that Cowper was enabled to co-operate with him in composing those inimitable songs, which have comforted, and will comfort tried believers to the end of time.

17. In the higher walks of life, among the statesmen and men of rank, no Christian, perhaps, ever shone with fairer lustre than William Wilberforce. His work on Practical Religion was eminently useful in the last generation; the great religious societies — Bible and Church Missionary Societies then springing into life — found in him a cordial supporter. His influence in the House of Commons, where religious men were few and religion hardly tolerated, was felt and feared; and to what degree the present extinction of the slave-trade, and the marvellous missionary operations to which it gave rise, are indebted to the labours

there is reason to believe,
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with Newton that was ble
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bosom, that holy zeal for men
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18. All this is very encou
shows us that if we will b
our parental duties, God is
withhold His blessing. Do
leave some traces behind us
terity that we ever lived?
not envy the sculptor's chi
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riched with the ashes an

in the grave, the Saviour whom you and your children loved, will have received you to Himself, where both he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

CHAPTER

"True, earnest sorrows; roo
Anguish, in grain; vexatio
Sure-footed griefs; solid c
Plain demonstrations, evid
Touching their proofs even
These are the sorrows here

EVERY one knows too
know it to their sorrow
great many bad child
who only add to its n
is generally thought,
rents are not without

prised to find that such neglected children go from bad to worse. It may, then, be useful to point out some of the dangers which, if not guarded against, will work immense mischief in the character of our children and the comfort of our households.

1. Where parents themselves are avowedly ungodly, neither caring for their own souls nor other persons', you are not surprised to find that their children tread in the same steps. If the son of Ahab and Jezebel turned out an idolater, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, he only walked in the way of his father and mother, and provoked God to anger, as they did; —all that, you say, is no more than might be expected. If the daughter of Herodias, who danced with wanton arts before Herod's dinner-company, had no virtue or modesty, her mother's shameless character easily explains the damsel's profligacy. If our streets are infested with young profligates, and prisons filled with *convicts*, we are not surprised at it, when

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duty, and cast off every bond
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2. Some parents fail in l
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and very needful their love
rents do not love them,—*wh*
remember, children are not
—they soon show signs of a

for two worlds, and your great business is to plant such principles in them as may keep them safe amidst the temptations of this life, and fit them, through God's infinite mercy, for the glories of the life to come. Remember, also, that you are not without faults. Perhaps you know that bitterly. But, put a double guard upon them—keep your heart with all diligence in the presence of your children. Whether they copy what is good or not, if we go wrong they will certainly follow us. If there be any society in which our graces should shine with brightest lustre, and where we should watch over our words, and actions, and tempers, with unsparing diligence, it should be when we are surrounded with our children, whose character for good or for evil, for time and eternity, we, more than any other beings upon the earth, are daily moulding.

Some, no doubt, fail because they do not give themselves the trouble to form their children's characters. They are content to make short work of it. When

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free themselves from all troul
an older age, they send th
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panions or their habits; an
schooldays are over, their boy
out to business, and their d
at home to flutter, as they pl
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and others settle imprudentl
trouble on all around them

themselves trouble, they must expect that each child thus neglected will one day prove a scourge to their back, and stand, with frowns and reproaches, at their dying bed. People excuse their neglect,—"Oh! poor things! they are so young—what can you expect? Time will teach them better!" I answer, Time teaches nothing. Time will abate their exuberant spirits. Time will turn their thoughts to other things. Time will immensely multiply their temptations. Time will strengthen their self-will, and weaken your parental authority. If parents have little control now, in a short time they will have none. Therefore, let us bend the twig while it is flexible, else it will grow rigid and ill-shapen, and no power on earth can bring it into proper form.

3. Over-indulgence leads not a few persons to leave their children to themselves. The name of Eli and the fate of his sons stand on record, an emphatic warning to parents against the dangers of *feeble and* ineffectual remonstrance. If

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nd Phinehas. Full well did their fat
know their misconduct, and detested i
his very heart. He warned them, too,
strong and serious words. But he h
not used the rod when he might, and n
they will not obey the curb. God se
him some solemn warnings. To fi
Samuel—a stranger's child—placed in
when his own sons were

timely death shall silence their scandalous vices, and pitiable destitution shall disgrace the withering remnant of his house. But even this black cloud, big with judgments hanging over his head, fails to rouse this indulgent old man to his duty. God spoke to him twice, yea, thrice, but no vigorous reformation follows. At last, three messages from God came direct to him in one night; and these, too, sent by young Samuel. Now he seems aroused; his sleep is gone; he waits till the morning, and hears from the faithful lips of Samuel that judgments are coming in earnest upon his house, whose lightest word will make men's ears to tingle. It is true, nine or ten years of forbearance are granted still; but it is all in vain. God's lingering chastisements come at last. When God begins, he also makes an end. In one day Hophni and Phinehas are shot in battle, and thirty thousand of their countrymen lie slaughtered in heaps around them. The ark of God is captured. Eli himself expires in an

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ample of domestic fidelity, commanding his children and his household after him to do judgment and justice; while the other is a melancholy warning to pious parents, not to bring discredit upon religion by indulgently letting their children walk in their own way. While Abraham's posterity has come down to our own day, and will hereafter be grafted into their own olive-tree, and occupy some illustrious place among prophetic glories yet to be revealed—every living trace of Eli's name has long ago disappeared from among men, many ages have rolled away since the last remnants of his family, marked out for judgments, were swept and exterminated from the earth.

6. It is painfully notorious that the children of pious parents do not always walk in their steps. We have just seen this exemplified in the misconduct of Eli's sons. Over-indulgence was their downfall. Lot, also, appears to be another striking instance of a pious father signally failing

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wife was, is passed by in emphatic silence. Whatever were her family connexions, she was not a suitable wife for Lot. She was a worldly-minded woman, and, no doubt, warped his judgment and troubled his soul. With such a companion, no wonder if Lot proves, in his family, an unstable and inconsistent man. Lot's imprudent marriage, which he must have formed without consulting God, and therefore without Abraham's approbation, was a wrong step, from which he never recovered. A marriage formed with no regard to God's word, and without the express sanction of pious and judicious parents, must be a curse. Lot was married, and surrounded with his family, when the unhappy dispute arose between his herdmen and those of his uncle Abraham. His removal, which cut off his family from Abraham's society, was a dark day in Lot's history. We read that Abraham, and Lot, too, both lifted up their eyes to survey the country, but with very different feelings. Like

looks out for [illegible]
land, with abundant supply of wat
his cattle,—"like the land of E
which looks as if Egypt were L
vourite place. Abraham, on the
hand, "lifts up his eyes," and look
the land by faith, as God's promis
heritance, which his posterity shou
sess, in which he was content to
without any provision, as a pilgrim
stranger, with a tent for his fam
an altar for God.

7. Lot, meanwhile, settles w
family in the fertile plains of
"He pitched his tent towards S
(Gen. xiii. 12.) With a family like
[illegible] This is ve

spiritual church ordinances likely to arrest and profit the soul—where religion is at a low ebb, and worldliness of all sorts infatuates the people—to fix one's abode in such a place is "pitching the tent towards Sodom." Some years since, a man who made some profession of religion opened an hotel. So far there was no harm done. In course of time, to secure more custom, he began Sunday trading. In a few years he died, leaving a widow and seven sons, who carried on the business, Sunday and week day. The sons all became drunkards, squandered all his property, and his widow is now sustained by the benevolence of some Christian friends. That man "pitched his tent towards Sodom."

8. When I see young men fond of gay society,—come home late in an evening,—frequent supper-rooms and theatres,—indulge in extravagances which their means will not justify,—and form acquaintances which they could not acknowledge to *their parents* without a blush,—I need not

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mity shall arouse them in time t
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the reader of these lines pitching
towards Sodom? If you are, bev
say, beware. But to return to I

9. His daughters grow up, and
attract the notice of the ungodl
bours. This again might well ha
his mind with grave misgivin
must have known that family co
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expressly forbidden. Yet, his d
are on visiting terms among s
sons, and Lot lets them alone.

kings invade the country where Lot dwelt. His property, to a great amount, is plundered and carried away. How his family escaped we know not, but Lot himself is taken off as their prisoner. He had laid up treasure for himself, and now the thieves break through and steal. What must his reflections now be when he finds himself torn from his family, a prisoner in exile, unexpectedly stripped to beggary? He sows to the flesh, and now of the flesh he reaps corruption.

10. Through Abraham's vigorous pursuit Lot is mercifully rescued, with all his property, and placed once more in the bosom of his family. While his grateful heart was fresh with this great deliverance, and his faith revived, probably he assumed a more decisive tone at the head of his household. But it is hard work, when one stands quite alone, to reclaim a worldly and reluctant family to any settled purposes for God. Just while some domestic trouble weighs them down, they *may seem* thoughtful. They may listen,

with Lot. The only cha
his merciful restoration,
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his family from the ung
place,—no signal of dang
distress,—no prayer for G

sees and hears, "vexes his righteous soul," and, perhaps, provokes his condemning frown. But, he knew beforehand what Sodom was, and still he chose to go there. He does no good, though he sat in the gate, as a man of importance and station. He gains no influence with the people. His religion carries no weight. Indeed, how could an irresolute man like Lot expect to do any good? "Look at home first," people would soon say; and he could not help feeling that such advice was bitterly needful. For his wife is worldly-minded to the heart's core; some of his daughters are consigned by worldly marriages to settled neglect of God; and his two single daughters are evidently not untainted in mind by the abominations of the place.

11. But for St. Peter's testimony, we should fear that Lot himself had lost every spark of religion. (2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.) His name, perhaps, may be added to the list of those who are "scarcely saved;" he *is a signal* instance of God's abounding

perfect,—but, while his name is in
among the records of Inspiratio
trophy of God's sovereign grac
also a warning to each one of u
ther parents or not, to keep ou
and our families unspotted fro
world. We have an admonitio
the lips of our blessed Lord, as so
it is personal,—"Remember Lot
He assigns no reason—but sets
name as a beacon, and bids his p
recollect her privileges and her
admonishing Christian parents
the perils of bringing up their
with a worldly spirit, contente
faithful testimony for God, we m

ominous silence the Scriptures omit all notice of his death! Parents! remember Lot!

12. The failure of some parents in bringing up their children, is owing to the unquestionable blots which disfigure their own personal Christianity. It will never succeed for parents to say to their young charge at home,—"You must do as I say, and not as I do!" For if things come to this, there is no hope whatever of their gaining much good from parental counsel. David's domestic training issued in lamentable failure. One seldom finds a family like his, in which crimes are perpetrated so outrageously flagrant, as to make the world cry aloud for shame. It is not unlikely that David's own sins, known and talked about in his family, led to this. And though, as a question of guilt between God and himself, those sins of enormous dye were completely blotted out, and the joys of God's salvation restored,—yet, he lost an influence in his *family* which no tears of penitence and no

breaks, or Adonijah's extra
would all fall powerless upo
high-spirited young men, wh
known their father's crimi
dishonour of Bathsheba, and
Uriah.

13. Every anxious paren
feel that home duties deman
consideration. We must
that our children will ob
walk uprightly before men
ourselves may be led, by his
that blessed path. We must
with persevering and praye
to bring them into the sam
in the place where the foun

burden it with a weight of cares that no mortal strength can carry. No sorrows are so bitter as those which flow from parents' bleeding hearts—no tears so burning as those which broken-hearted parents shed over rebellious children. How many have reason to bewail, though with unavailing sorrow, that they ever entered on domestic life, and wish that they had gone down to their graves in childless solitude! If, then, we expect that our children shall smooth life's pathway, and lighten its cares—if we expect them to follow us in the obedience of Christ—to occupy our places well—to practise our duties, and inherit our comforts;—if we expect them to gather around our deathbed with tears of love, and join us in heaven with smiles of eternal triumph, then let us take care that we train them with a vigorous hand, and watch over them with a vigilant eye, place none but holy influences around them, and screen them from contact with *evil,—let us* commit them to God every

just, we shall say, ...
—"Here am I, and the children whi
thou hast given me."

FORESHADOWS.

CHAPTER V.

"What manner of child shall this be?"

As soon as persons become parents, the consciousness of responsibility instinctively rushes to their minds. Even as to this life, no thoughtful parent can look upon an infant, just added to his family, but the thought occurs,—What griefs, perils, temptations, tears, this little creature must go through before life's eventful journey shall be over! The Christian parent will go further, and say,—"Yes!—and what will be his final destiny,—what goal will he reach,—what world will he enter,—*what* companions shall await his arrival,

when death shall close those eyes, and
his body in the tomb? Such reflecti
expressing their hopes and fears, m
occur to every right-minded parent.

1. In the course of a little time,
dispositions of children are so far unfol
hat the outlines of future character
ome discernible, and we can distingu
ymptoms which betoken the course
uture things. In the most hopeful ch
en some dispositions will show themsel
which demand correction or rebuke.
s not forget the fallen nature which t
ave inherited from us; the conflicts wh
e are forced to maintain in order to w

language too severe. On every ground that you can imagine,—whether reason, scripture, justice, gratitude, yea, self-interest,—it is the duty of a child to love, honour, and obey his father and mother. To receive rudeness instead of respect, disobedience instead of cheerful compliance, contempt instead of reverence, and cold indifference instead of confiding love,—this is one of the heaviest trials that break the hearts of parents. They welcome their children with fond affections and golden hopes; but not unfrequently they have to feel the truth of Solomon's proverb,—"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him." (Prov. xvii. 25.) This bitter sorrow springs from their wills not being brought into subjection. Disobedience in children is high treason. The Jewish law punished incorrigible disobedience as a capital offence. "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when

him out unto the elders of
unto the gate of his place: a
say unto the elders of his c
son is stubborn and rebelli
not obey our voice; he is a
drunkard. And all the m
shall stone him with stones,
so shalt thou put evil away
you; and all Israel shall he
(Deut. xxi. 18–21.) It is t
rejection of domestic a
trampling upon the paren
Either disobedience must
and both parents honoured
mission, or else dark da
must be the dre

likely to unsettle persons; above all, in these days when schemes, theories, and opinions of all sorts are afloat, whereby many persons you would not suspect are disturbed. In religion, the most important concern of all,—into what a maze of bewilderment many young persons are enticed! Some one insinuates a doubt concerning the truth of Christianity; questions the inspiration of the Scriptures; exaggerates the divisions of the Church, and the disputed points among its members; then asks,—Which is right? Perhaps this—perhaps that—perhaps none! Thus by little and little their confidence is shaken,—their peace broken; the way is then open to say something seductive about the Church of Rome;—she is palmed off as alone infallible,—she only can decide what is truth and what is not, —her members, it is pretended, have none of these distractions. Soon these unwary listeners are allured to a Romish chapel,—to judge for themselves, as *they call it*. Some wily Jesuit, on the

the leaven works, by little a
First, he must have a prayer-
blazoned with a crucifix; ther
solemn obscurity, talks about th
Church principles, and sacramen
and the comfort of confession
hies off to some Tractarian
—that model invention for
Papists—whence, on an incli
his slippery feet soon land him
bewildered, deceived, into the
the Harlot Church. How ma
are broken-hearted by this disa
in their children!

4. Many young persons are
in their general habits, that

plans by which they may promote their children's welfare—then, when they expect to find them qualified to enter with vigour upon the duties of life, to behold them indolent in mind and body, ignorant, restless, inefficient, extravagant,—what a mortifying disappointment! To see a young man soon tired of one thing, then fancies another,—leaves one situation without much credit, enters another with no life, —has no heart to encounter difficulties, and, of course, employers have no wish to encumber themselves with such characters,—what a blighting of parental expectations! Instead of repaying his parents' anxieties with determined efforts to please, and bright prospects of success, he is returned to his father's hands, a drain upon his income, a weight on his exertions, and a heavier burden upon his heart. "This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation." (Ezek. xix. 14.)

5. The son of the eminent Andrew Fuller is, perhaps, one of the most heart-rending *examples* of the ruinous evils of this

good situation ...
soon records in his diary,—" Alas
seen that in the conduct of my
which has almost broken my h
instability is continually appearin
must leave London, and what to
him I know not." Another situa
procured in his native town,
habitual restlessness soon show
and he enlisted in the army.
discharged, because he was ap
Another situation was found, bu
he enlisted the second time.
pliance with his wishes, his fa
cured his discharge; seeing n
his settling in business, his son
situation in a

lingering illness, in which there is some reason to hope he saw and bewailed the error of his ways. He died off Lisbon, leaving his sad history to tell to others the miserable fruits of a discontented and restless spirit. *

6. The darkest fears, however, which can haunt the breasts of parents, are raised by the appearance of any profligate propensities in their children. Their loving hearts so revolt from the very idea, that, at first, they can hardly believe it possible that one of their own children, whom, in infancy, they fondly pressed to their bosom,—whom they taught to pray, and read God's word, and led to the house of God, Sabbath after Sabbath,—whom they warned and exhorted, with burning words and tears of love, should, after all, prefer bad society,—absent himself from business,—keep late hours,—indulge expensive pleasures,—lounge about the streets in an evening,—frequent saloons for

* Life by Dr. Ryland, p. 297, &c.

about them as dull and mopi
thirst for excitement and nov
the day without a thought
desecrate his Sabbath by u
pleasure-taking,—when the
bers of a family begin to sho
things like these, parents m
their minds for scenes of h
anguish, and nights of sle
"And is it come to this at l
Christian parent, smitten to
with a weight of grief, dis
fear, which is past endurane
if I had known that all n
teaching, and tears, which tl

strength in vain! Those prayers, instructions, and warnings, serve only to aggravate his guilt and embitter my disappointment."

7. Many parents are far, very far, from being happy in their children, though they may not belong to the classes already specified. Their children are not disobedient at home; they acknowledge parental authority; they are not unsettled in their habits, and have no reason to be dissatisfied with their position or prospects; they abhor Popery in every form, and profligacy excites their unmitigated disgust: nor would they take a step in life in disregard of their parents' sanction. Many parents thankfully recognise these excellences in their children. But then, they feel that, after all, "the one thing" is lacking. When they hear of the bitter disappointments of other parents, some called to stand by the bedside of their dying children, and witness the last struggles of expiring nature, without any good hopes of their immortal welfare; when they see

cannot be too thankful th
have neither been seduce
Infidelity, nor damaged t
by vice; still, they grie
they may never meet then
that. Their children ma
objections to Christianity
respect for sacred things
truth,—disclaim no dut
vity, but sometimes feel
world to come, and sec
some day or other, tl
Lord for themselves;
year by year, stifling
still halting between t

8 This is the grief

upon the serious duties of married life. Then, again, the hopes of parents are awakened, that new cares and responsibilities may lead them to God; but, alas! these expectations die out also. Then the afflictions of life come in earnest; sorrows, such as no earlier years produced, and burdens of care, unfelt in life's brighter days, weigh down the spirit. Then, perhaps, at length, when some fond idol lays shivered at their feet, and bright visions of earthly good are faded to darkness and disappointment; not, it may be, until your heart that loves them has ceased to ache, and your lips, silenced by death, can warn no more; then all your prayers and teachings may come again, like messages from eternity, to your children's thoughts; and in that season of desolation and tears, the Spirit may visit their souls with His converting grace, and the children of so many prayers may, at last, be brought, penitent and believing, to the Saviour's cross.

9. *Perhaps* some younger members of a

desire. The conviction is too
too painful to be suppresse
parents have serious grou
satisfaction and regret. In
this may be, your own refl
suggest. But, let me remin
your parents have felt and d
In infancy and childhood, w
your wants, screened you fr
sand perils, nourished and
up, and did all they could t
happy? Who expended all
care on your education, an
every means, to prepare y
position in life with credit

than any being in the world beside, and showed an interest in you and your welfare which no labour could lessen, and years could not wear out? Who mentioned your name most frequently in prayer, shed most tears, cherished the fondest hopes of your future happiness, endured most self-denials to do you good, and thought nothing too hard, if, by any means, it would benefit you? Who wanted to live, mainly for your sake, or, in death, left the charge, in words never to be forgotten, that, above all things, you should meet them in heaven, at the right hand of God? Who, my young readers, did all this, and far, far more for you? You answer, as with one voice,—"It was our parents." Then, what is your return? Ingratitude is a crime so dark, that the man was never found that would confess himself guilty of it. And shall you repay your parents—ay, such parents as yours have been—with cold neglect, with rebellious looks, and heartbreaking misconduct? "No! no!" methinks you reply.

comfort that filial gratitude ca
And if we have planted a
wounded our parents' heart,
memory of our misconduct sh
vour to our love, and stren
obedience, that we may ag
peace to the bosoms whose
is not quenched even by our

10. From what has been s
easy to note down the elem
racter which are hailed b
pledges of future worth. It
be disguised, that they wh
riously trained their children
and virtue, with prayers, a

good. And it is extremely encouraging to know that there are many children, too, who fulfil the most sanguine expectations. Who are they? What manner of children must they be, in whom their happy and privileged Christian parents rejoice as their most precious treasure upon earth?

11. It cannot be repeated too often, that such children will have the fifth commandment graven,—burnt, if you will,—into the elements of their very nature. To honour their father and mother will be among the primary laws of their being. They would as soon think of committing highway robbery as do or say anything which betokened disregard, disrespect, disobedience, towards their parents. A father once said to me about his son, then just grown to manhood, "that he never gave him five minutes' anxiety in all his life." That is the sort of character which commends itself irresistibly to parents' hearts.

12. Educational proficiency is an
nent which, especially in this age, par
ustly expect. While many cheerf
xpend large sums in order to comm
eaching of a high order, to qualify t
hildren for progress in future
whether in trade or otherwise, no
ents can be satisfied unless their child
hall come home with their minds c
ated by wise discipline, and enric
with solid and useful learning. It
hameful failure and disappointment
oung persons leaving school, for t
arents to find that they have wa
heir seed-time in indolence and folly,
ow they must enter upon life's d

ginning, that bright days are reserved for a character like this.

13. Deference towards themselves, and their own judgment, in the great steps of life, parents expect in their children. Young persons little suspect how much they lose when they forego the counsel of judicious parents. None are so well able to advise as they. Their experience in the world; their deep interest in their children and their welfare; their full knowledge of their temperaments and failings, make their parents the wisest advisers of their children. And they have a right to be consulted. It is becoming in all parties. Parents will meet their children with sympathy, and enter with cordial interest into their wishes; and seldom will young persons regret, on entering upon life, having honourably consulted their parents, and weighed their advice. How many gratefully acknowledge, in after life, that they owe a debt of obligation which they can never fully *appreciate*, for the advice of their pa-

selves with snares ...
entailed years of bitter exper
hopeless regret!

14. But, above all, it is only v
children give tokens of real re
gun in the heart, that Christia
can feel that entire satisfacti
leaves nothing else to wish.
their ready compliance with a
bits of a Christian family—thei
daily Scripture-reading obser
private prayer conscientiously
—their Sabbath-days kept h
readiness at all times to walk
parents to the house of God,-
ward respect for religion is

them to gain men's esteem,—they must have the honour that cometh from God. It is not enough for them to prosper in life,—they must get to heaven.

It completes the joy of parents, and richly rewards their cares, when their children come to the age of confirmation, if not earlier, to find that, underneath the features of an outward Christian deportment which their children have long shown, there have been growing up within the lovelier elements of a contrite and believing heart. To such parents and children, confirmation-day is the happy and memorable era, marked ever after as the time when they gave their hearts to God, sincerely and for ever, as His redeemed and obedient children, and joined themselves to the God of their parents in a perpetual covenant that should not be forgotten.

15. In the course of years, the time of separation must come. The happiest household must be broken up—the tenderest links that Nature weaves must be

loving, however loved, mus
other a long, long farewell.
dinary course of things, tl
must gather round the b
dying parents, and receive,
of tears, their parting benedic
times, however, the trial is r
it is the parents' lot to witne
struggles of their children,
them to an early grave. B
ever shall be your case, re
charge you, that in addition
wildering agonies of a dyin
have not then to seek the pa
accumulated sins, and the c
a neglected but immortal so

glorious multitude that no man can number, and enter upon a career of triumphant glory which man's mind cannot conceive nor eternity impair.

THE WELL-SPR

CHAPTER VI

" From human eyes 'tis better to cc
Much that I suffer, much I hourl
But, oh! this thought does tranq
All, all is known to Thee!"

1. When sentiments full of t
dom are given to us by men
who have evidently put then

immortal sorrow, still the truth stands,—God will supply all the needs of His people. But this assurance is all the more weighty when we remember that it was given by a saint of God, who lived upon it for well-nigh thirty years of a life of unparalleled necessities, and who had drawn upon those "riches in glory" more largely than any other man that ever breathed. He wrote this assurance within the very walls of a prison. Thus it is no mere conjecture, but the matured fruit of his own experience, after undergoing hardships which made privation familiar, and God's promises needful; and here he lays it down for the comfort of tried believers in every age. Be ye sure of this,—"My God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 19.)

2. This assurance does not, however, belong to every one. The world is full of needy persons, whose pressing wants are not supplied. They rise up from youth to manhood,—they go down from manhood *to old age*, overwhelmed with wants.

pon the tombs of myriads might
scribed,—" Here lie the remains of
hose life was a vain struggle with ne
iscontent." How many have we
nown who might have said, on th
eath-bed,—" Here am I, a sad specin
f life, mocked by disappointment, a
nding in shame!" What a contrast
e Apostle Paul! And many are n
ruggling through the world who can s
ith humility and gratitude,—" Althou
hers may languish in want, or vex the
lves with envious discontent, still,
od will supply all my need, accord
His riches in glory by Christ Jesu

are real believers, and their faith is tested by suffering for Christ's sake: "for to them is given, not only to believe but also to suffer for Christ's sake" (chap. i. 29). They are persons of uniform obedience, whether the Apostle was with them or not (chap. ii. 12), and he regarded them as "his joy and his crown" in the great day of the Lord (chap. iv. 1).

Putting these things together we learn, that when persons receive the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into their hearts, so that they experience its transforming power and share its blessings,—when they have received Christ Jesus as their life and their righteousness, and are willing to endure hardships for His sake,—when this inward experience works itself out in all the consistencies of everyday godliness,—and faithful pastors confidently look upon them as the spiritual fruits of their labour, and expect to meet them again with joy in a better world,—these are the persons who are to be comforted with this blessed assurance, that whatever

riches in g...

3. It seems, then, that the
believing people of God are
exempt from real necessities.
supposes, on becoming a faith
of the Lord Jesus, that he sh
more wants, he is greatly mist
cases are not few where the pe
that since he began to seel
country, life's passage thither
far more rough and difficult t
ever since he began to seek
have gone so contrary, that fr
he gave up the world, the
spitefully to have given up hi

This is often one of the se
believed, w

on the stretch, so that you are forced to see that an all-wise Father must have some design in keeping you now so dependent and so needy.

4. The world itself in which we live is the source of daily, grievous wants. How many things we fervently desire which the world as resolutely denies us. Did we know the straitened condition of some families,—overhear the anxious deliberations of many Christian parents consulting how to meet their urgent necessities,—what wants we should find pressing them to the earth, and wearing down their elasticity, and keeping them vainly waiting for some deliverance! Moreover, what wants are created by domestic reverses! Comforts, once abundant enough, poured a stream of joyfulness into your unthankful lap,—for then you never thought of the Giver: but, one by one, they have disappeared; alienated affection has withered some; sudden losses have rudely torn away others; the grave, perhaps, has *swallowed* some. Losses, changes, be-

and very grievous, ...
of earthly comforts less and les
to your astonishment and secre
instead of your wonted affluence
yourself an impoverished man,—
of walking, as you used to do, "u
high places of the earth," you
nished and even brought to a
which once you thought it impos
you to occupy.

5. But since the soul and it
condition have become your chie
new wants have multiplied upor
long as the formalities of religic
sufficient, the salvation of your
a thing too shadowy, too unreal.

But now

in your sins, contented with the world and with yourself, and left the future without anxiety, you could not be said to feel any wants about things beyond the grave. But now that the darkness is past, and light from that eternal world is poured into your soul, you start up, and inquire with astonishment, "What have I been living for?" Now your wants begin. You bless God that at length you are brought to feel, and desire these feelings to deepen into tenfold earnestness. New wants rise before you upon matters so unutterably momentous, that you wonder how it could be that you never felt these things before. That world now stands before you in all its reality and nearness, so that new wants come upon you with their irresistible demands. Sin, wrath, and judgment to come, —the pit of hell,—the worm,—the fire, and the groans that lost souls utter without ceasing,—all are real things now to you, and create real wants,—which it were madness now not to feel as wants. You stand guilty *before God*, and you want righteousness

d pardon. You are burdened
ot of sin too heavy too bear, a
nt deliverance and rest; you
etched with indwelling sin as a p
l can well make you, and you
ntain to wash in, and a Physi
l; you are travelling on to e
d you want food from heaven
d garments of salvation to wea
nt to know whom you have b
d to feel sure that He will ke
til that day; you know that the
rrow, and the gate strait: but yo
ove all things, to be one of the fe
and believing souls that walk
ther, and endure steadfastly to t

the mire, and sets him with the princes, even with the princes of His people.

6. But think of the supply which is laid up to meet these wants. Let the first thought bring you at once to the Fountain Head, from whom all blessings flow. If we stop short by going to any creature, instead of betaking ourselves at once to Him who is the Sovereign Giver of all mercy, we make a great mistake. David understood this. "The Lord is my Shepherd,"—then he could say, "I shall not want." And again, "God is our refuge and strength,"—then he drew the comfort from it, "therefore will I not fear." If you expect man to supply your wants, you will be woefully disappointed. The experience of every one, whether religious or worldly, confirms him in this conclusion. Put no trust in man. Do not calculate upon man. He is a cloud without water. He is an unreal thing. He is a broken reed at the best. Do not lean there. It will give way. Look to the everlasting hills. *There* mercy shall be built up for ever.

Son, and God the Spirit,
confiding heart to Him, "All
springs are in Thee." St. Paul
this when he said, with unfalteri
rance, "My God shall supply
need." And so said another, in
who knew well how faithful God

> "Though troubles assail, and dangers aff
> Though friends should all fail, and foes
> Yet one thing secures us, whatever bet
> The Scripture assures us,—the Lord

7. In order to gain this confi
rance, that God will supply all
we are reminded of the riches of
are prone to be discouraged
He can supply

goodness,"—he tells the Romans of "the depth of the riches of His wisdom," and the Ephesians, of "the exceeding riches of His grace;" and, as to all imaginable earthly good, "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Whatever be our necessities, has not Christ "unsearchable riches" to supply us? Myriads of needy sinners go to Him daily with their urgent wants and empty hands, nor does one ever come back disappointed; then how can His people want? If they do, surely it is not because they are straitened in Him. "He is able to do above all that we ask," yea, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask"—yea, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Well might David exclaim, with wonder and gratitude, "Oh! how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee." (Ps. xxxi. 19.) With such supplies reserved in the treasury of heaven, let us distrust no more, but confidently believe, that "they who fear the *Lord shall* not want any good thing."

wants are real necessi
press the soul, that it must see
in prayer. Prayer is the utter
wants. And when, in answer t
cries, the blessing comes, how pre
is—how much it contains—how
riches and gladdens the soul! On
ing received out of the rich tre
God is beyond all price. An a
sanctified, a loss borne with pa
temptation well overcome, a l
prayer offered, the cares of the d
a filial spirit "as to the Lord,"—a
cies are worth more than all th
discovered gold regions which
and unsettle the world. Wh

forgotten. Any trifle "light as air" justifies him, he thinks, in thrusting all this aside with the hackneyed pretext that he has not time. But what, I ask, has he time for? He has time to eat his dinner, but not time to meet the craving exigences of his immortal soul. He has time to please man, but not time to seek His favour who is able to withdraw all his comforts, and quench every hope. He has time to provide for threescore years and ten, and not time to provide for ten thousand, thousand ages, which will roll on without ceasing, when this flickering life is burnt out and come to nothing!

9. We should remember that the Lord Jesus, the Incarnate Saviour of His people, is the channel through which all these supplies are derived. The grateful believer will lose no opportunity for magnifying his heavenly Master, and commending Him to others. How can such an one forget Christ?—How can he? I ask. Not a single mercy ever reaches *the sinner*, either temporal or spiritual,

with mockery by ...
between two malefactors, amidst app
darkness, upon Mount Calvary.
people love to trace His hand, no
in the redemption of their souls he
opening the kingdom of heaven her
but in all the every-day comfort
crown our dwellings, and sparkle
feet. And when we shall reach th
venly shore, and look back up
countless mercies with which I
been laden, with what feelings o
tude shall we turn to Him who
and sufferings, and grace, opened
ing way, and brought us safely
"Ye know the grace of our Lo
... He was rich

imaginary wants. We often set our minds upon what God as resolutely forbids. Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard; but God never intended him to have it. The two disciples wanted places of honour in Christ's kingdom; He took care that they should lack nothing, but He assured them they should drink His cup of suffering. David wanted to flee away like a dove, and be at rest; God supplied his wants, but left him to be hunted like a partridge on the mountains. Jonah wanted exemption from a self-denying mission to Nineveh; God sent him down to the depths of the ocean, and there made him a marvellous specimen of His sustaining care. Abraham wanted Ishmael to live before him; God rejected his unbelieving wish, and gave him Isaac, the child of promise. The Shunammite wept for her child's recovery; God let him die, but supplied the widow's want by raising him from the dead.

11. So we are apt to say,—"I want this *burden* removed,—I want that sorrow

path, to keep you dependent, b
your utmost need while en
with necessities; just as He
send His own disciples on thei
sion with no money and no
then, on returning, He asked
divine tenderness, "Lacked
thing? And they said, blu
downhearted at their distr
thing."

12. But we must leave th
mode of our supply to God
have no idea of waiting patie
promised good; they put out
with fretful eagerness to have i

let, — He tries our faith, whether it staggers or not, and when we are just sinking, then comes the blessing. He sent wonderful deliverance to Abraham, but not till his very hand was raised to slay his son. He interposed for Joseph, but not till he was cast into the pit and the prison. He sent deliverance to Jacob, but not till Joseph was gone, and Simeon was gone, and they would take Benjamin also. He granted marvellous interpositions to David, but not till he felt, with sinking heart, that there is but a step between him and death. Be sure, then, your God will supply all your need, but never forget that your times are in His hand.

13. This sustaining promise embraces the whole of our future wants. No thoughtful mind can look into his own futurity without appalling misgivings. He sees the wrecks of others, soul and body, and the thought must come to his mind: "Perhaps that may be my lot!" And many a time things look so dark, the way *so crowded* with perils, and fears, and dif-

culties, that his heart faints. What
man of the world do with such a p
ect?

But what a voice is this in the d
nd stormy night of life,—"My
hall supply all your need, according
His riches in glory by Christ Jesus!"
so? Then I'll go straight on; I
eak, and weary, and helpless, but
od will see that I do not want. He
heet me at the right time, and bring
he right mercy; I see them not
ut they are sown for me, and will
pring up as I go along. Then I
ot fear. He that led Israel by the p

there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places." (Hab. iii. 18, 19.)

And now, my little book, go with thy messages of warning and help to the dwellings of the righteous! Some who may yet read thy pages have already heard thy story. It will bear, however, to be twice told. Its colours, here and there, may seem too dark to some, but, bid them wait awhile,—a few years more will show them true to nature. Parents, wearied with cares, but comforted by unfailing promises, and children guided by loving wisdom, striving to repay their debts with obedient affection, may gather something, perchance, from thee that may make their day brighter. It may be thy lot to enter some sad dwelling, "divided *against itself*." Repeat the message of

house.

gained. And into whatsoever h
shalt be privileged to enter,
Spirit of Love go with thee, " tc
heart of the fathers to the chil
the heart of the children to the
lest He come and smite the ear
curse." (Mal. iv. 6.)